

**MAN VS. WILD:** A MODERN HOME IN THE WOODS AN 1850s FARMHOUSE RENOVATION  
ARCHITECT AS DESIGNER AND CLIENT **DOWNTOWN DWELLING:** FROM COUNTRY LIVING TO A SLEEK CITY LOFT

FALL 2018

# ia architect

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AIA IOWA



## Residential Nuance

Personal Choice & Variation

**PROJECT NAME:**  
A MONUMENTAL JOURNEY

**ARTIST:**  
KERRY JAMES MARSHALL

**INSTALLATION MATERIALS:**  
MANGANESE  
IRONSPOT BRICK

**ARCHITECT:**  
SUBSTANCE ARCHITECTURE

**MASONRY CONTRACTOR:**  
SEEDORFF MASONRY



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# Editor's letter



## Welcome!

In our fall issue titled Residential Nuance, we explore the array of personal choice and variation that exists within residential architecture. We view how place, lifestyle, and the architectural diagram delicately combine to create a house that is a home. Whether the dwelling is a loft set in an urban core, a modern residence nestled in a wooded landscape, or a renovated farmhouse that acknowledges traditional Iowa dialect, each architectural solution is a unique composition of landscape, space, materials, and function. The architects involved are skilled at the challenge of combining the intimacy of the program with architectural design. The desired lifestyle influences the architecture, and the architecture directly influences the lifestyle.

We hope you enjoy our residential-themed issue.

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**Anna Squier, Assoc. AIA**

*Editor, Iowa Architect*

## iaarchitect

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# contents

IOWA ARCHITECT MAGAZINE FALL 2018



^ Collaboration at the Core of Contemporary, p. 34

## Features

### 24 A House in the Woods

A modern house embraces its wild and wooly setting

### 28 The Farmhouse on Foster Road

Once forgotten, this 1850s farmhouse gets a new life

### 34 Collaboration at the Core of Contemporary

Creative, sleek design reinforces a sense of family

### 38 Opposition Research

Space and material balance privacy and exposure in this prairie home

### 40 Imagine the Potential

From shanty to sustainable dream home

## Departments

### 08 Collected

"Forces of Nature" at Reiman Gardens; Celebrating AIA Citizen Architects; Michael Broshar creates light-filled watercolors; "A Monumental Journey" lands in Des Moines

### 16 On the Boards

Children and Family Urban Movement; Gray's Station; Waterloo Community School District Middle School Renovation & Addition

### 18 Perspectives

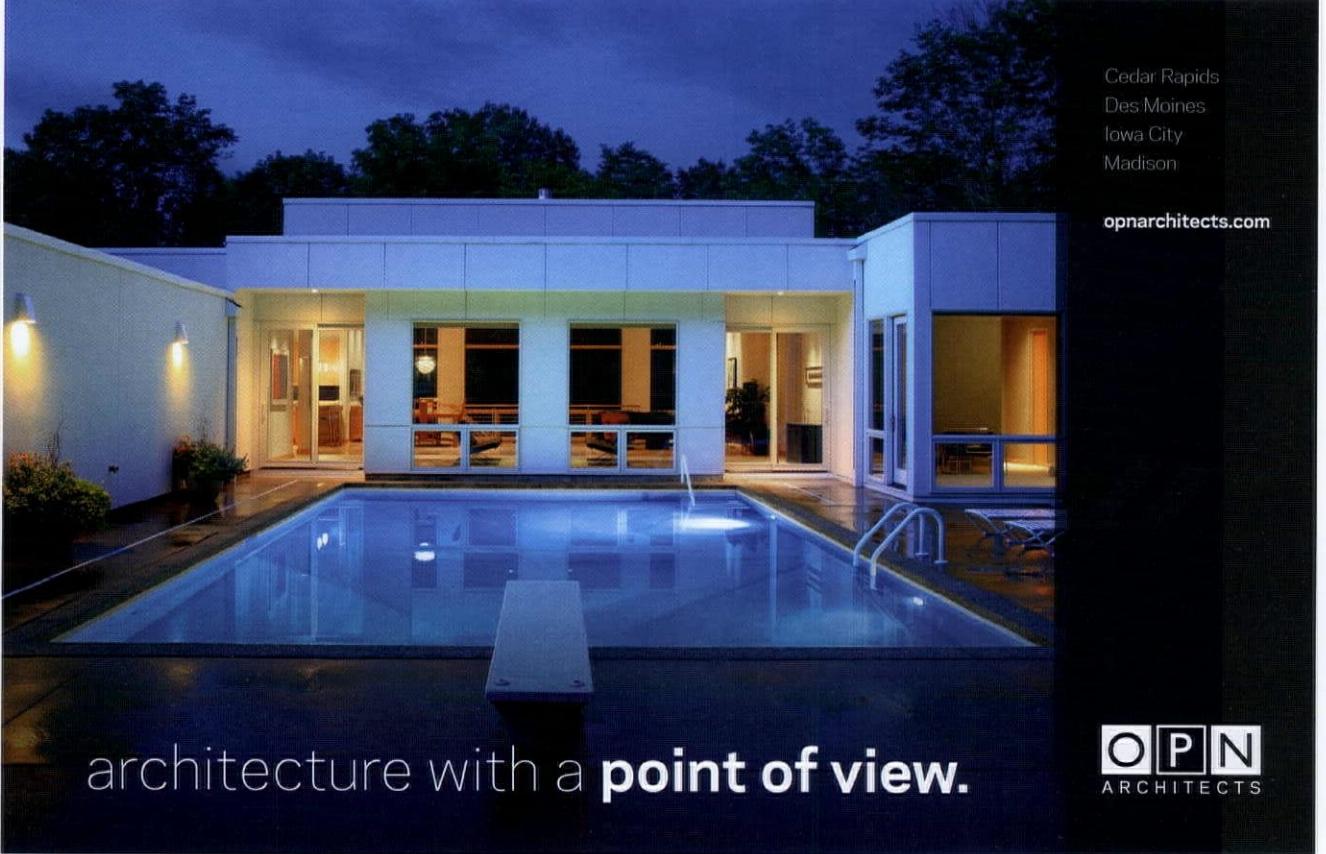
The Challenge of Home: Habitat for Humanity's Task Within Iowa's Changing Landscape

### 20 Profile

A Look and a Lifestyle: The Knocks' Downtown Des Moines Residence



ON THE COVER  
The Farmhouse on Foster Road, p. 28



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The screenshot shows the Molin website homepage. At the top, there are two images: one of a yellow building with a red awning and another of a black building with a red logo. Below these are the words "Design » Manufacture » Install" and "PRECAST & PRESTRESSED CONCRETE". A list of products includes "Architectural & Structural Wall Panels", "Hollow Core Plank | Beams | Columns", and "Stadia | Stairs". In the center is a large red oval containing the word "MOLIN" in white. Below it is the tagline "Quality Concrete Solutions since 1897". At the bottom, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, along with the phone number 651.786.7722, the fax number 800.336.6546, the address 415 Lilac Street, Lino Lakes, MN 55014, and the website MOLIN.com.



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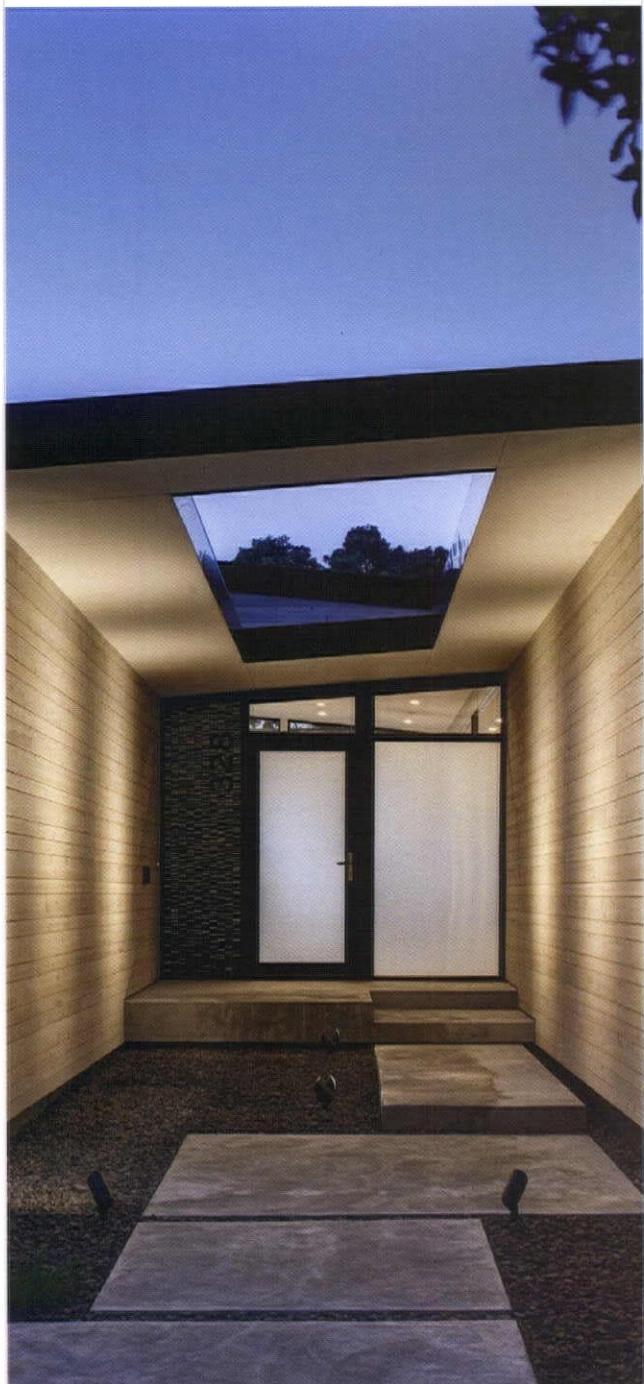


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## RETRO REVIVAL



## Joined Forces

An interactive exhibit teaches lessons in collaboration and engineering

**WORDS:** LAUREN DAY **IMAGES:** HEATHER SCHULTE, JOE KASTNER & CHRISTOPHER GANNON

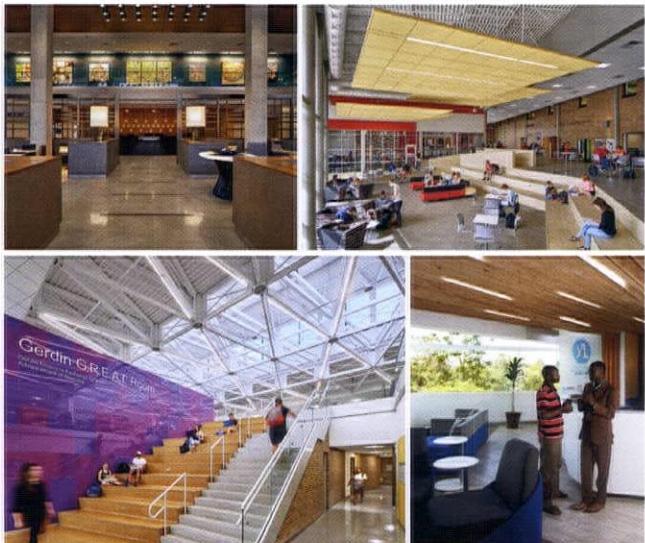
For the last three years, Iowa State University students enrolled in Architecture 202 have worked on a collaborative design-build project each spring where they draft, produce, and execute a larger-than-life structure. This year, the second-year architecture students created a 1,300-square-foot installation in Reiman Gardens in Ames. The 77 students started with the garden's theme for 2018, Movement, to form their ideas for the project and created an interactive, reflective, and textural design called "Forces of Nature."

Wooden frames, metal cables, woven polyester cord, and hanging iridescent panels combine to make a structure that is as secure as it is see-through. Each panel has a different design, encouraging the public to interact with it individually as well as the structure as a whole. Some panels are meant to be climbed on, walked under or stood in front of to be appreciated. The organic shapes and colors incorporated into various parts of the display were inspired by nature seen throughout the 17 acres at Reiman Gardens.

The project as a whole taught students about drafting, construction, engineering, record keeping, community access, and working as a part of a large team with a common goal. The "Forces of Nature" exhibition – located in the northeast corner of the property – is open through Nov. 3, 2018.



The goal for second-year architecture students was to understand the relationship between design and construction, with an added benefit of creating something for the public to enjoy. The finished sculpture allows community members to climb over, sit under, and walk through it as a kinetic experience.



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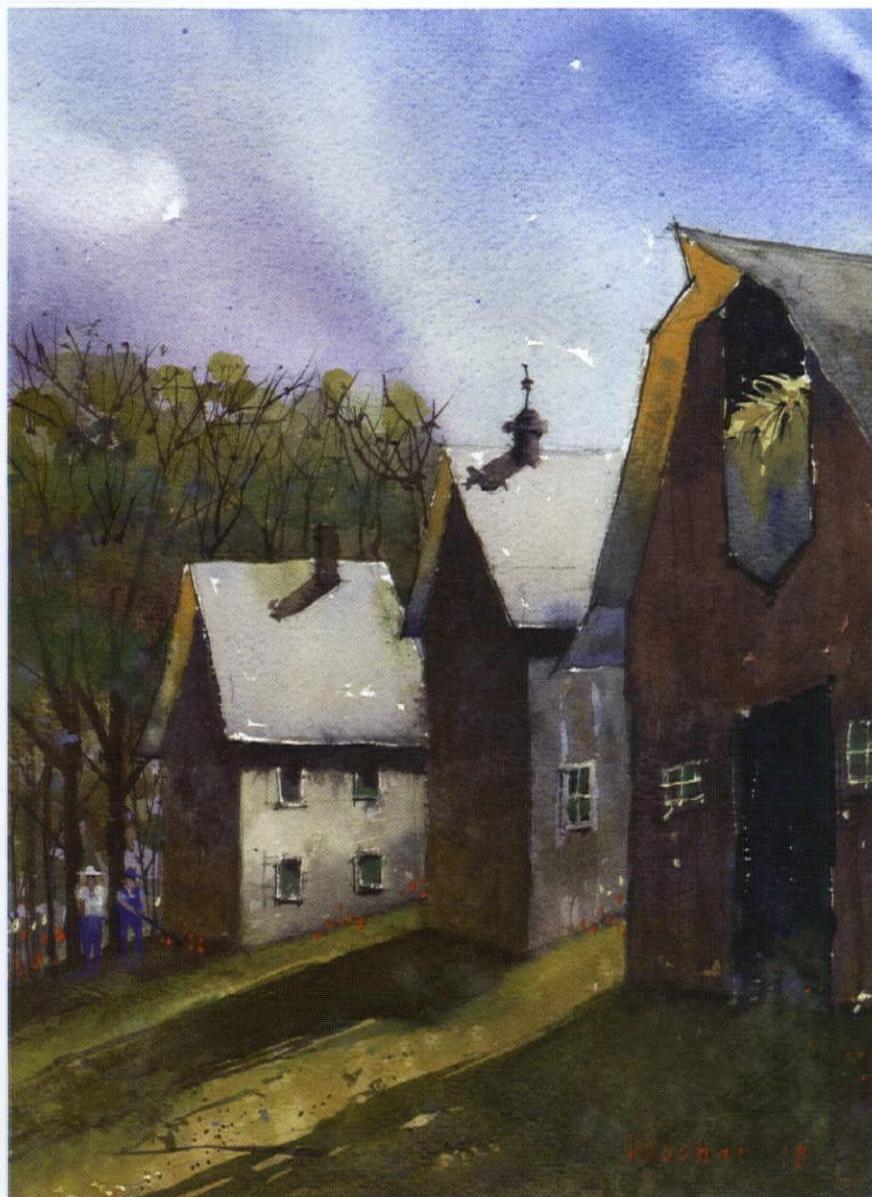
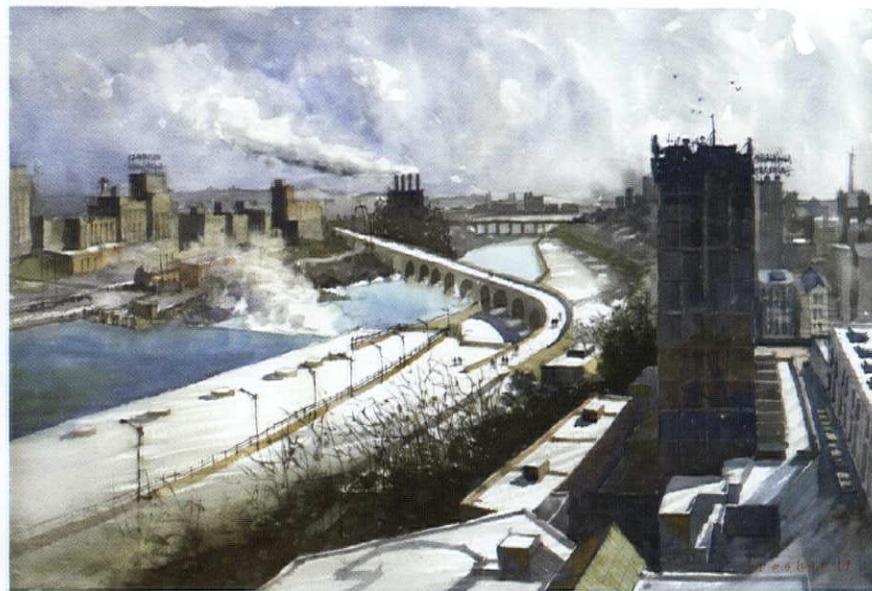
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tomorrow ►►  
and for  
years to come ►►►

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see the winners on [IowaArchitecture.org](http://IowaArchitecture.org) starting in October!



I collected



## Architect as Artist

**Michael Broshar uses his love of architecture to create beautiful, light-filled paintings**

**WORDS:** LIZ LIDGETT

**IMAGES:** MICHAEL BROSHAR, FAIA

Where some viewers may see neglect, artist Michael Broshar, FAIA, sees beauty in the wear and decline of a building. Where some artists may see too large a difficulty working with watercolor, Broshar is attracted to the uncertainty of the result. He says of the medium, "I like the challenge of watercolor, because you could never paint the same thing twice and have it turn out the same."

As an architect, Broshar gravitates toward these large structures seen dotted throughout the Iowa landscape. His work is inspired by impressionistic images from his travels, whether the Iowa countryside, cities, or coastal environments. Light and shadow play a huge role in his work as well. As Broshar puts it, "using light and contrasting values to define a scene." If the sun changes, or the light shifts, it could become a totally different scene. There is a sense of the ephemeral nature of a special, blink-and-you'll-miss-it moment layered with solid, large industrial and agricultural structures. An impermanent point in time that Broshar captures record of, just for you, the viewer.

Broshar's work can be found at [MichaelBroshar.com](http://MichaelBroshar.com).

---

**Top:** "Mill District," watercolor painting, Michael Broshar **Bottom:** "Earlville, IA Farm," watercolor painting, Michael Broshar



# A MONUMENTAL JOURNEY

Long-awaited sculpture memorializes National Bar Association founders

**WORDS:** ABBY GILMAN **IMAGES:** HANNAH JOHNSON, ASSOC. AIA

Ninety-four years ago, in the height of Jim Crow America, when black lawyers were barred membership in the American Bar Association, a group of 12 African-American lawyers gathered at an Iowa Colored Bar Association convention held in Des Moines. In a great show of courage, these pioneering lawyers founded the National Bar Association (NBA), an organization that, to this day, aims to represent the interests of African-American lawyers, judges, law professors, and law students.

Sited in a park along the Des Moines River, “A Monumental Journey” is hard to miss. The manganese black brick-clad sculpture stands 30 feet tall and weighs nearly 25 tons. The shape alludes to African talking drums, a symbol of justice for artist Kerry James Marshall. “I tried to find a treatment that gives a sense of stability, a sense of endurance and longevity,” Marshall, a celebrated artist focused on the representation of African Americans in society, culture, and art history, told the Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation. “It’s bigger than the individuals that are named. It’s a concept that’s endured for almost 100 years, from the founding of the NBA.”

“The forms were made from the combination of many small units – solid bricks – relating to the incremental effort needed to create lasting societal change,” says Tim Hickman, AIA, president of the Art Foundation and principal at substance, which led the group of consultants who completed the landscape architecture and detailed the steel fabrication of Marshall’s design as a pro bono contribution. Key to that incremental effort are the original 12 founders, whose names are carved in granite stones that line the base of the sculpture.

The drums were positioned off-kilter, a sort of perceived balancing act reminding the viewer that justice is precarious. It’s a testament to the past, and a challenge for the future. As Marshall said at the July dedication, “The history of ‘A Monumental Journey’ starts today.”



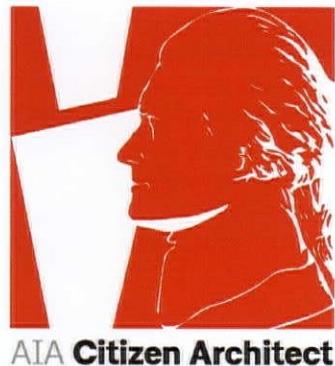
**Top:** The project team inspects the bones of the sculpture.  
**Above:** The design of the sculpture references African talking drums, stacked precariously off-kilter to represent the fine balance of justice.

I collected

# AIA Iowa Citizen Architect Program

Recognizing AIA Iowa members' participation in community and advocacy across the state

WORDS: ABBY GILMAN



The American Institute of Architects (AIA), Iowa Chapter recognizes the important contributions many of our members make through volunteer efforts across the state. Design professionals have many skills that can benefit community efforts. AIA Iowa encourages members to lend their talents and time through participating in the Citizen Architect Program.

The Citizen Architect Program is divided into two tracks: Community and Advocacy. Participants in the Community track are AIA Iowa members who serve as an appointed or elected member of a governing body or serve as a volunteer leader for a non-profit organization that benefits people or a community in need. All Community track members advocate for AIA Iowa's core principles of quality design, sustainability, and livable communities. AIA Iowa members participating in the Advocacy track are engaged with their state legislators and local leaders to advocate for the profession.

Thank you to all the 2018 AIA Iowa Citizen Architect Program participants.

## Advocacy Track

These 94 AIA Iowa members are advocates for higher living standards, the creation of a sustainable environment, quality of life, and the greater good in Iowa.

Sherwood Adams, AIA	Steven Gray, AIA	Jon Lipman, AIA	Norman Rudi, AIA
Linda Alfson Schemmel, AIA	Geoffrey Grimes, AIA	Kent Lutz, AIA	Mark Seabold, AIA
Scott Allen, AIA	Deborah Hauptmann, Assoc. AIA	Kim McDonald, AIA	Rick Seely, AIA
Terry Allers, AIA	Gregory Hayes, AIA	Dale McKinney, FAIA	Jarrod Siegel, Assoc. AIA
Mindy Aust, AIA	Naura Heiman Godar, AIA	James Meier-Gast, AIA	Michael Simonson, AIA
Benjamin Beard, AIA	Danielle Hermann, AIA	Steve Miller, AIA	Jonathan Sloan, AIA
Vitus Bering, AIA	Tonia Householder, AIA	Joshua Moe, AIA	Rob Smith, AIA
Johnny Boyd, AIA	Tom Hurd, AIA	Kristin Mohr, AIA	Edward Soenke, AIA
Michael Broshar, FAIA	Charles Janson, AIA	Kevin Monson, AIA	Matthew Stewart, AIA
Jesse Bulman, AIA	Marty Johnson, AIA	Kim Mulch, AIA	Jenna Thompson, Assoc. AIA
Justin Burnham, Assoc. AIA	Bethany Jordan, AIA	Martha Norbeck, AIA	Hoang Tran, Assoc. AIA
Tom Clause, FAIA	Lyndley Kent, AIA	Jeffrey O'Brien, AIA	Jordan Trannel, Assoc. AIA
Mathew Coen, AIA	John Kerss, AIA	Cynthia O'Brien, Assoc. AIA	Gary Van Dyke, AIA
Matt Cole, AIA	Steve King, AIA	Scott Olson, AIA	Joe Wallace, AIA
Ric D'Amico, AIA Iowa Professional Affiliate	Sadie Kleppe, AIA	Matt Ostanik, AIA	Christopher Wand, AIA
Bradley Davison-Rippey, AIA	Matt Krieger, AIA	Chip Overton, AIA	Brian Warthen, AIA
William Dikis, FAIA	Jason Kruse, AIA	Matthew Palan, AIA	Kerry Weig, AIA
Dan Drendel, AIA	Rod Kruse, AIA	Kelli Paskert, AIA Iowa Allied Member	Eric Wessels, AIA
Kevin Eipperle, AIA	William Lawrence, AIA	Raymond Phillips, AIA	Alan Wieskamp, AIA
Julie Etheredge, Assoc. AIA	Brad Leeper, AIA	Jerry Purdy, AIA	Steve Wilke-Shapiro, AIA
Scotney Fenton, AIA	Thomas Leslie, FAIA	Jonathan Ramsey, AIA	Kenneth Wind, AIA
Douglas Foreshoe, AIA	Dan Levi, AIA	Jessica Reinert, Hon. AIA Iowa	Thomas Wollan, AIA
Matthew Gaul, AIA	Michael Lewis, AIA	Tina Rhodes, Assoc. AIA	
Elizabeth Goll, Assoc. AIA	Nicholas Lindsley, AIA	Daryl Robinson, AIA	

#### Community Track

These 37 AIA Iowa members hold over 69 volunteer positions across Iowa.

Scott Allen, AIA  
Benjamin Beard, AIA  
Michael Broshar, FAIA  
Matthew Brown, AIA  
Sarah Coleman, AIA  
Curtis Ehler, AIA  
Scotney Fenton, AIA  
Elizabeth Goll, Assoc. AIA  
Scott Hatfield, AIA  
Naura Heiman Godar, AIA  
Danielle Hermann, AIA  
Emily Hilgendorf, Assoc. AIA  
Karl Kaufman, AIA  
Jason Kruse, AIA  
Paul Mankins, FAIA  
Kyle Martin, AIA  
Christina Monk, AIA  
Michael Morman, AIA  
Martha Norbeck, AIA  
Scott Olson, AIA  
Raymond Phillips, AIA  
Holly Pohlmeier, Assoc. AIA  
Josh Ridgely, AIA  
Brian Schwartz, AIA  
Craig Shannon, AIA  
Cory Sharp, AIA  
Douglas Sires, AIA  
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Edward Soenke, AIA  
James Spiller, AIA  
Rod Stevens, AIA  
Steve Stimmel, AIA  
Aaron Twedt, AIA  
Joseph Wallace, AIA  
Christopher Wand, AIA  
Todd Wehr, AIA  
Eric Wessels, AIA



## SPOTLIGHT: Matt Krieger

### Getting to know one of 2018's Citizen Architect Program participants

**WORDS:** JEN PETERS **IMAGE:** NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS

The American Institute of Architects (AIA), Iowa Chapter is honored to represent many of the state's architects and design professionals, and to share the amazing design work our members pour time and talent into. We are also honored to recognize the volunteerism our members display outside the workplace through the Citizen Architect Program. Each Citizen Architect Program participant upholds the AIA's values and represents them in communities across Iowa.

We are excited to feature Matt Krieger, AIA, of Neumann Monson Architects in Iowa City as one of our 2018 Citizen Architect Program Participants. Krieger was appointed the licensed architect representative for the Iowa City Climate Action Steering Committee, which fulfills an essential role in the community's climate action planning process. The product of the committee's efforts will be the community's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, which will lead to the implementation of specific goals, objectives, and suggested strategies outlined in the plan. Krieger is responsible for coordinating with Iowa City's consulting firm to create the consensus-based Climate Action and Adaptation Plan to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for 2025 and 2050. He participates in organizing, seeking, and considering public input; reviews plan drafts; prioritizes the list of actionable measures to reach reduction targets; and assists with outreach in the community.

"Participating in the Citizen Architect Program is an excellent opportunity to showcase the important activities happening in our communities and bring greater awareness to their causes," Krieger says. "I'm both honored and humbled to be recognized and hope it inspires others to engage more frequently beyond our typical work as architects and designers. We owe it to ourselves, our profession, and the society we work so hard to build."

Thank you for your service, Matt Krieger, and thank you to all of our 2018 Citizen Architect Program participants.

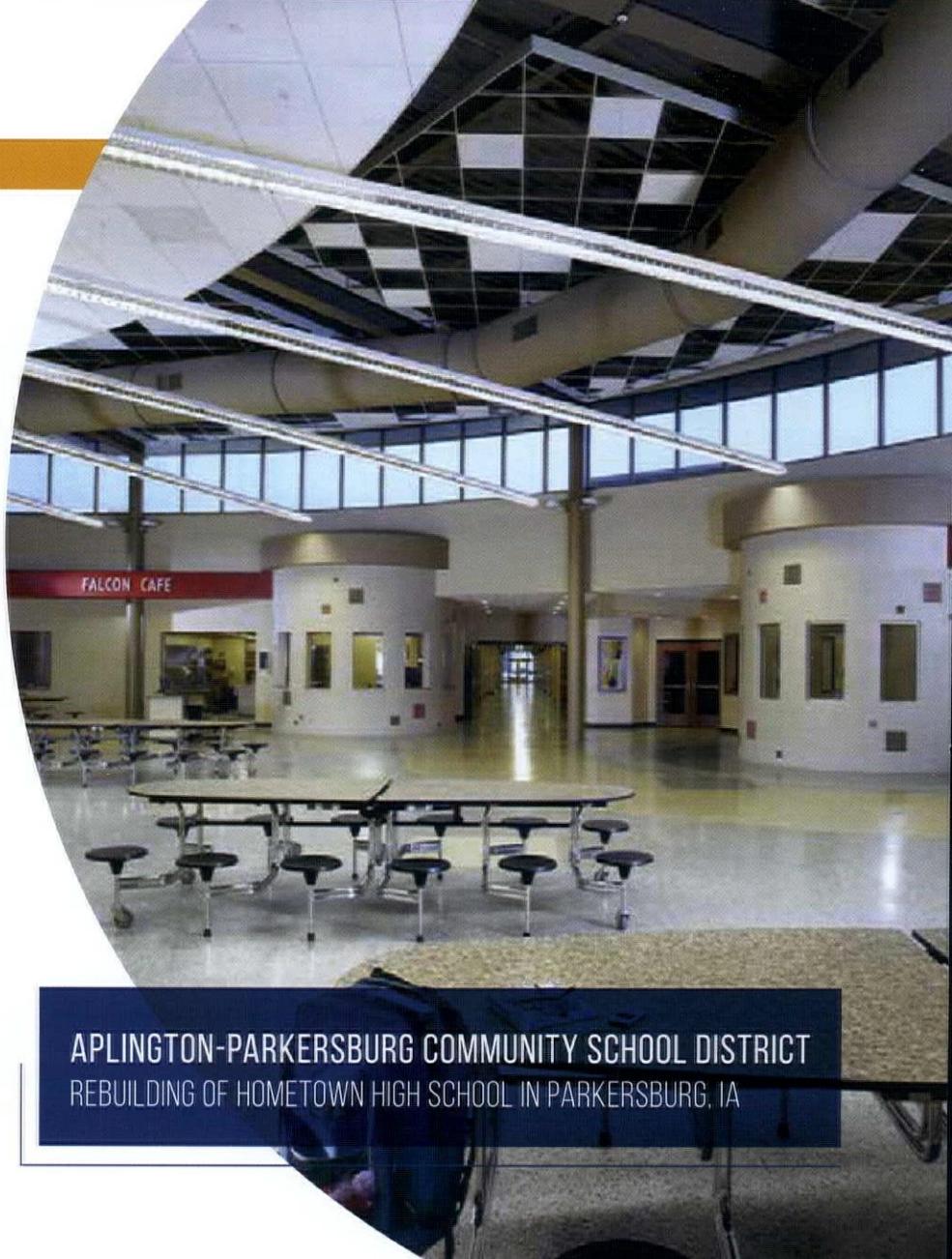
## INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

A strong education system is the foundation of any great community, and ISG Principal and Senior Architect, Craig Schwerdtfeger, AIA, has been a key advocate for Iowa school districts and higher education partners throughout his career. Since starting with StruXture Architects in 1970, Craig has traveled across the state collaborating with superintendents, facility managers, and passionate community advocates to shape inspiring learning environments for students of all ages.

In addition to his contributions throughout Iowa, Craig played a major role in the firm's transition of Waterloo-based architecture and interior design firm StruXture into the ISG brand. Craig embodies the spirit of innovation that ISG values. Here's to visionary solutions and dedication!

### Career Involvement:

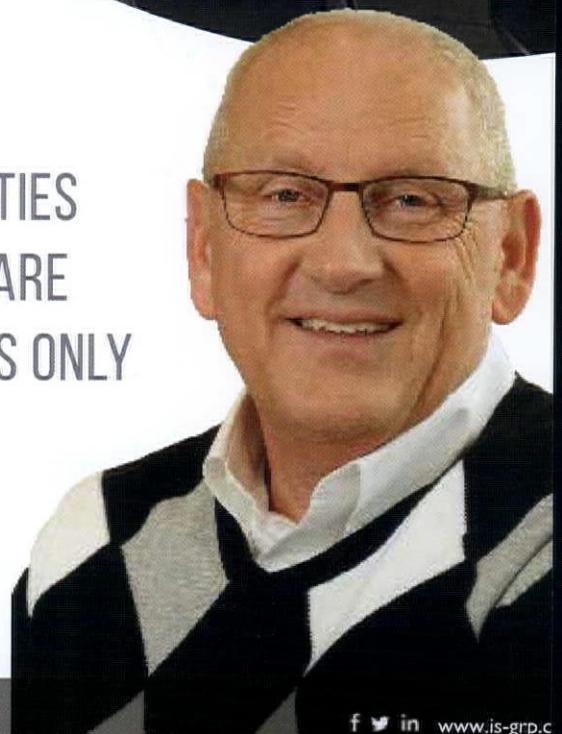
- Cedar Falls Board of Adjustment (Mayoral Appointed)
- ADA Compliance Committee, City of Waterloo
- Cedar Falls Schools Partner in Education
- Cedar Valley Hospice Advisory Board Member
- Council of Educational Facility Planners, International



### APLINGTON-PARKERSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REBUILDING OF HOMETOWN HIGH SCHOOL IN PARKERSBURG, IA

“

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# on the boards

Projects  
In Progress



Waterloo, Iowa

INVISION Architecture

## Waterloo Community School District Middle School Renovation & Addition

The Waterloo Community School District's existing middle school, constructed in the 1970s, is outdated and lacks natural daylight. INVISION Architecture is working with the district to design a 77,000-square-foot renovation and 3,500-square-foot addition, which will house a new career training center. The design introduces 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning components and supports 15 new training programs in spaces ranging from high-bay labs to collaborative classrooms for cross-disciplinary education. A major goal of the project is to introduce natural daylight throughout the building. The addition will serve as a key identifier and new entry for the building. The weathered steel form is balanced with an expansive glass curtain wall, allowing views into and out of the new career center. The project is estimated to be complete in 2019.

## Children and Family Urban Movement

Children and Family Urban Movement (CFUM) is a community-based non-profit that serves children, youth, and families in a five-neighborhood area just north of downtown Des Moines. Through a broad variety of programs, CFUM builds educational success, promotes healthy living, and fosters community engagement. The organization has outgrown its longtime home base at Trinity Methodist Church and is working with Christensen Development to construct a new facility to consolidate programs from three scattered sites. The brick mass illustrates CFUM's longstanding commitment to the neighborhood and responds to the local historic district guidelines. The flat lock metal clad elements behind the brick convey a contemporary interpretation of the cedar shingles found on many nearby homes. A 100-foot glass band along the sidewalk and drop-off lane heightens a visual connection between CFUM's core programming and the passersby. Construction will be completed in summer of 2019.



Des Moines, Iowa

Slingshot Architecture



Des Moines, Iowa

Slingshot Architecture

## Gray's Station

Identifiable and unique, the Gray's Station neighborhood development, in collaboration with Hubbell Realty Co., will serve as a gateway to downtown Des Moines. The new development will offer residents varying housing options, recreational amenities, commercial vibrancy, great views, and green park areas. The site runs along the south of Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, with 11<sup>th</sup> Street cutting through. Proposed as an active pedestrian- and bike-friendly street, 11<sup>th</sup> Street will move residents and visitors from the parkway to the connector streets of Gray's Station and downtown. A southern building will act as a gateway to the neighborhood, and a northern building will nestle up to the parkway. Green spaces will serve as areas of respite and be activated with commercial uses. Each residence area will contain a large communal gathering plaza and expansive views of the city skyline.

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OF IOWA'S PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

# perspectives

Guest  
Thoughts



## THE CHALLENGE OF HOME

Habitat for Humanity's task within Iowa's changing landscape

**WORDS:** ANDREW BALLARD, AIA, IOWA VALLEY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, BOARD MEMBER **IMAGES:** HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity seems like a natural fit for an architect, so when I landed in Iowa City a few years ago, I leapt at the chance to get involved. Growing up, I always knew which were the "Habitat Houses" in my town, and I had a vague feeling they were the site of some extraordinary kind of charity. I'm not sure I was alone in my assumptions; Habitat for Humanity is so culturally ingrained that it can be more easily recognized than understood. Now, as a board member, I am learning how the organization is more interesting, complex, and challenging than I imagined the first time I showed up to swing a hammer.

Habitat's mission of empowerment requires an active campaign of diversification and outreach. The non-profit works in many ways: new construction, repairs, building

loans, title and ownership facilitation, political advocacy, and disaster prevention and recovery. Its modus operandi is partnership, providing a channel for resources and a forum for homeownership. New owners build alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage.

While single-family homes are still a broadly relevant solution, Habitat affiliates like Iowa Valley are exploring alternatives to address Iowa's varied residential landscapes. In Iowa City, where land cost is rising, multi-family housing may prove to be a more efficient application of resources. However, complexity and upfront cost would be greater, testing the financial and operational capacity of our already lean operation. In rural areas, where need is dispersed, repairing and modifying homes for

# Habitat's mission of empowerment requires an active campaign of diversification and outreach.

seniors and disabled residents can have the highest impact. Our Helping Hands program is broadening its outreach in Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, and Washington counties.

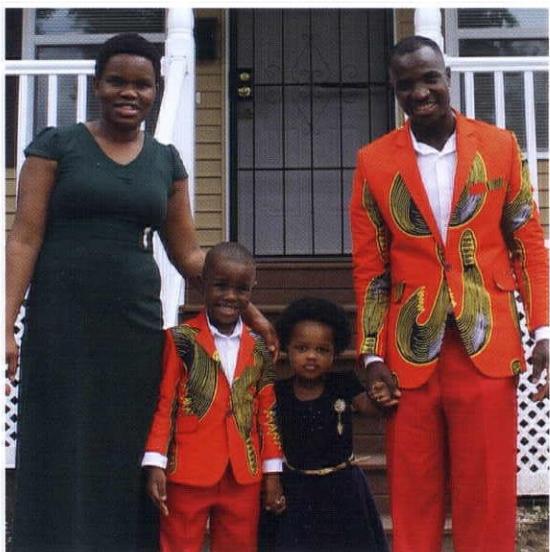
Expanded services requires increased resources, and we direct the lion's share of our work toward maintaining financial viability. We host periodic fundraising events, collect proceeds from Habitat ReStore sales, and maintain a staunchly supportive network of donors, sponsors, contributors, and collaborators. However, as the community's needs grow, we need to explore new, more flexible strategies. We're adapting our outreach to the digital media landscape and testing ways to harness our construction expertise to direct more revenue to the lower end of our income range target.

The aim is generational. Even when Habitat homeowners continue to struggle with low income and the setbacks that can accompany it, we see the next generation – the one growing up in a stable household – thriving. Benefits to the community grow from there.

I enjoy Habitat's complex challenges for the same reasons I enjoy the breadth of architectural practice. Architects are trained to think flexibly and collaboratively; to lead, coordinate, cajole, and play the long game. Habitat for Humanity fits that bill nicely. I strongly encourage more people in our profession to get involved.

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**Opposite:** Volunteers from Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity help in the construction of a Habitat home (Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity). **From top to bottom:** Architects from Iowa City help frame a Habitat home (Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity); A volunteer from the Cedar Valley Habitat affiliate participates in construction during National Women Build Week (Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity); A Quad Cities Habitat for Humanity family moves into their newly constructed Habitat home (Quad Cities Habitat for Humanity); Architects from Iowa City and family members raise money at a 5K run/walk event (Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity).



# profile

People of  
Interest



Floor-to-ceiling windows on three sides of the unit give the loft panoramic views of downtown Des Moines.



# A Look and a Lifestyle

Merging functionality and design  
in downtown Des Moines

**WORDS:** ALI AJANGO **IMAGES:** CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO  
**ARCHITECT:** NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS

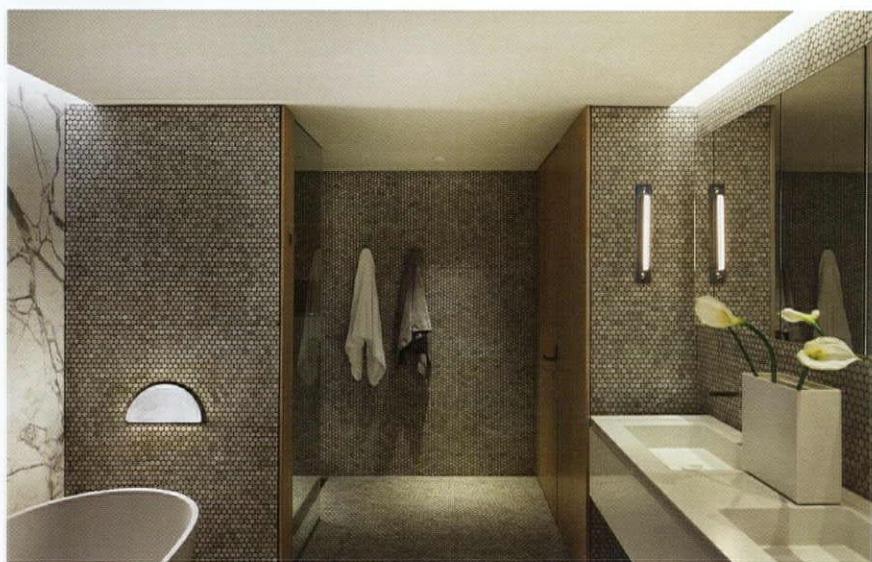
In many instances, we adjust ourselves to fit a space; designing a residence is an opportunity to adjust a space to fit ourselves. Transitioning from a traditional colonial house in rural Iowa to an urban loft in downtown Des Moines, Jan and Karl Knock created a home that not only represented their passions, but also embraced functionality.

When the Knocks talked retirement and their futures, they made the decision to move to Des Moines for its restaurants, trails, airport, and more. They settled on the Whiteline Lofts building and partnered with a Neumann Monson Architects design team – led by principal Khalid Khan, Assoc. AIA, with Jackson Den Herder, AIA, and Projects Contemporary Furniture – to create a home that fit their next step. “They latched onto the idea of starting a new phase in their lives – not discarding where they’re coming from, but accepting of where they are moving to,” says Khan.

Coming into the project, the Knocks brought several furniture items, some art pieces, and, most important, an open mind. Working with a design team made the process extremely collaborative, the Knocks say. Jan elaborates: “They interviewed us and listened very carefully to what we wanted, but brought significant insight and skills that helped us realize what our goals were for the space.” Coming from a large house full of color, the design team focused on creating an open, clean feel. Kelli Linнемeyer, owner of Projects Contemporary Furniture, elaborates: “Leaving a minimal, neutral palette lets the architecture shine. Then we [were able to] add texture and color in the furniture and in the details.” Though the space is smaller, contrasts of black wood, white walls, and opaque accents form an illusion of largeness and embrace the loft’s features. Wood accents throughout the apartment coupled with windows across three sides of the unit bring in both the natural and urban environment.

In the spirit of moving forward, the Knocks decided to leave behind some antique furniture and focus instead on their love of

# profile



modern art. Korean pottery and Asian art that had been gifts over the years became the inspiration for their minimalist front entry that acts as both a transition space and a place to decompress. Dark wood and gallery-style lighting enhance a more than 10-foot-long rice paper mural and display other favorite pieces. The couple describes the hallway as an experience. “We have touch points that are meaningful to us,” says Jan.

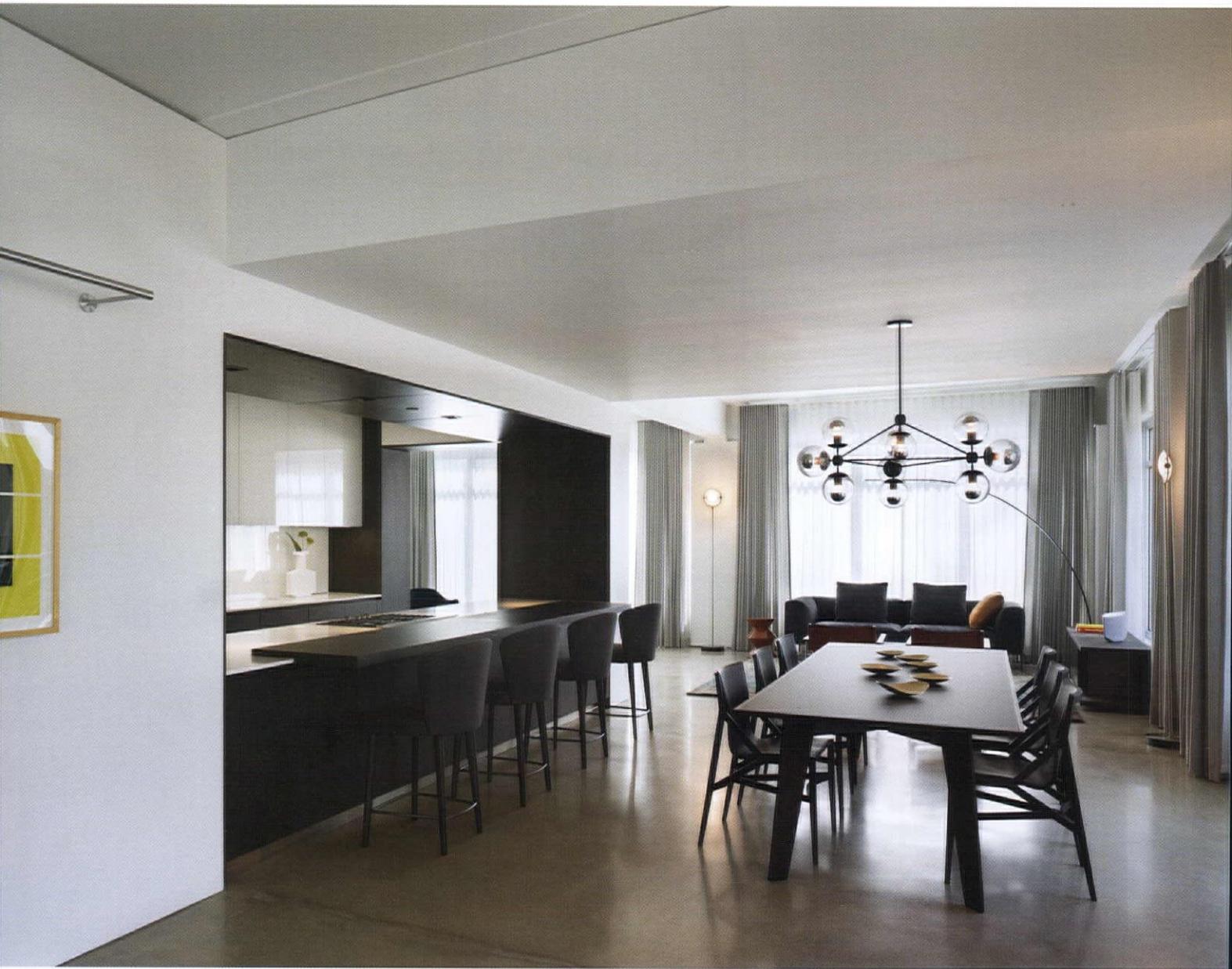
The importance of residential design comes not only in appearance, but functionality. “We tried to make comfort a priority for the Knocks – even though it’s minimal, it’s still rich and textural, warm and inviting,” Linnemeyer says. Dropped ceilings in the Knocks’ unit offer quiet spaces. Wide walking spaces contribute to a sense of spaciousness. A pantry, rather than cluttered countertops, embraces the minimalist design. Sliding doors throughout the loft conserve space. Personalized door handles assist “older hands.” Overall, it’s an easy space to live in. Openness and minimal clutter give the couple a chance to spend less time housekeeping and more time exploring their interests.

Living in a complex, the Knocks mention, provides some similarities to their small-town lifestyle. Outside their apartment, the proximity to downtown allows them an urban experience while still feeling very in touch with nature. Though much changed for the Knocks in the move, the design of the new home “helped us get where we wanted to go,” Jan says. “Working with the design of the apartment helped us with that transition; [we designed] not only a look, but also a lifestyle.”

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**Top:** A neutral palette and deliberate decor minimizes visual clutter and makes colorful features within the home pop. **Middle:** A dropped ceiling in the dining room defines the space. Black elm creates a stark contrast against the lighter features throughout the loft and makes the space feel clean, open, and large. **Bottom:** Straight lines, neutral tones, and a wide layout contribute to the bathroom's modern yet functional Poliform design.

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# A House in the Woods

With one foot firmly in a thoroughly modern design, a house nonetheless embraces its wild and wooly setting

WORDS: KELLY ROBERSON IMAGES: KELLY CALLEWAERT ARCHITECT: BNIM

By all accounts, according to the modern landscape of Iowa, the lushly wooded eight acres in the central section of the state should not exist. They should not, by logic of endless fields of industrialized agriculture and the ever-burgeoning urban areas, have been preserved.

But those eight acres, full of conifers and turkeys, oaks and deer, escaped intact, the vegetation clutching and rioting down a slope, growing in and around a ravine. Down and down until it terminates at a creek. It was a treasure found and, its owners decided, the perfect place to build a home.

Unlike many people, however, the homeowners were intent on preserving the appearance of a woods – just a woods and nothing more – from any passersby. Admiring eyes weren't the point; seclusion was. "It is a beautiful piece of land, and they wanted to build a beautiful house on it," says Jonathan Ramsey, AIA, architect with BNIM. "They had an idea they wanted to do something dramatic and unique."

Those two words definitely fit the narrative of the eventual design: It is dramatic. It is unique. But the Ravine Residence, as it has come to be known, is something more. It's subversive in a positive way. Much the same way that those woods aren't supposed to exist in modern-day Iowa, the house that BNIM and the owners created feels very much as if was transplanted from a windswept cliff in New Zealand, from the desert of Palm Springs, from a spot surrounded by the ancient trees of the Pacific Northwest. It is a sweeping gesture to what meticulous, thoughtful, rigorous design and exacting homeowners can produce.

What drove the home's design, of course, was the landscape, and more specifically the ravine; the topography revealed a natural entry point on the left side of the property, and the private spaces seemed more naturally a fit on the opposite side of the ravine. "They didn't want to be at the low part of the site," says Dana Sorensen, AIA, architect with BNIM. "There's a great oak grove there. And they didn't want to be exposed at the top of the hill. Bridging the ravine ended up being a really good solution that allowed them to be a lot more part of the landscape. You're kind of in a ravine when you are in the house. You can experience that environment in both directions from the living space."

In plan, the organizing principles are fairly straightforward. On the upper floor and to one side are library, patio, and garage spaces. On the other side of that same floor are more private

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A dramatic, wood-side view of the ravine and the section of the house that straddles it. Wood and concrete nestle into the natural incline on this section of the property.

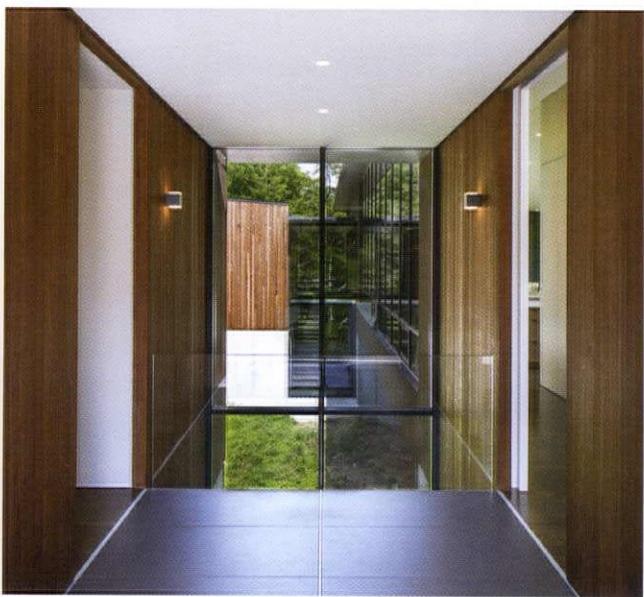






"We wanted to have places where the family could come together, and places where the family could find their own private spaces within the house."

— JONATHAN RAMSEY, AIA



**Opposite: Top:** The tiniest of details — look under the ravine section for a slim black horizontal line that denotes the air intake system — create a design that seems effortless. **Left:** While views outside the home offer drama, views inside the home help to create an unusual immersion in the woods outside. **Right Top:** A wall of windows offers a natural flood of light for the master bath, which seems suspended in the trees. **Right Bottom:** An open living space provides a contemporary-minded area for the owners to gather, rest, recharge, and socialize.

**Top:** Elegant stairs lead from the ground floor up, with an open detailing that maintains an unrestricted view from front to back and outside.

**Bottom:** Upon entering the home, a high level of transparency connects with the landscape and circulation beyond with glimpses of the adjacent living space.

spaces, including bedrooms. Bridging the two sides is the shared and open living space. On the lower floor under the bedrooms is another set of guest spaces; underneath the library/patio is an expansive and casual family living space. “We wanted to have places where the family could come together, and places where the family could find their own private spaces within the house,” says Ramsey.

What’s different about the Ravine Residence than most other homes is not just the experience from inside the spaces, but from outside, too. Inside, you really do feel as if you’re in the tree canopy: The windows are expansive and unobtrusive, the siting thoughtful. But from the inside, you also have views of the rest of the house — and that’s the distinction. Most houses are self-contained enough that you don’t really consider what they look like, what their experience might contribute to the daily living you do in those spaces.

“This has more of a dialogue with the landscape than just a simple rectangular footprint,” says Ramsey. “We were trying to create experiences where you see the house within the landscape from inside the house. When you frame the views, the house is sometimes in those views, too. There’s the porch space, for example, that you get to off the kitchen: You can see out to that from there, but when you’re in a different part of the house, you can see this small space. All of the house ends up in the woods and within the tree canopy.”

The views organize the visual hierarchy but the details don’t get in the way of that either. The selection of materials was intended to minimize distraction, to be as unobtrusive in the landscape as possible. For example, exterior light fixtures go from inside to out, pulling the eye through. A vaulted ceiling in the main living space helps to accentuate the feeling of expansiveness, while the wood floor creates a visual connection to the landscape beyond, as do dark mullions and frames around the windows. To eliminate gutters, BNIM worked carefully on the roof slopes and drainage.

One of the invisible details that Sorensen extols is the mechanical air intake, of all things. Underneath the ravine area, there’s a tiny linear grille that’s responsible for drawing fresh air into the mechanical system. “The mundane things you have to put on a house, we worked hard to make them elegant and so it feels effortless,” he says.

The architects’ rigor wasn’t just about design; it was siting and budget, too. “Everyone has a budget, and they wanted to put their money where it was most effective,” says Ramsey. “There were things we did to be efficient. For example, the concrete was all done on two-foot forms so they could reuse those steel forms in different parts of the house. It added rigor and texture, but it was also a cost-effective way to frame up that concrete.”

If the home reflects the self, a set of values, the kind of experiences that someone hopes come to pass for families, friends, and visitors, then having ultimate control over that process, as in the Ravine Residence, is an example to emulate. “They pushed us to giving them something special,” says Ramsey. “If you want your home to convey your values, when you get to start from scratch, why wouldn’t you try to achieve that?”

# The Farmhouse on Foster Road

Neumann Monson's modern additions give this once-forgotten 1850s farmhouse new life

**WORDS:** HANNAH GILMAN **IMAGES:** CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO **ARCHITECT:** NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS



Years of overgrowth were cleared to reveal the 1850s stunner. Minimalistic insertions such as dormers expand the living space and add a modern twist to the home's historic charm.

It's no secret that farmhouse-inspired homes are having a major moment. RealEstate.com reports that starter homes with listed amenities such as "farmhouse sink" and "barn door" have sold for upwards of 29 percent – and that's just a slice of the market. The trend is no longer a trend – it's a style.

For Bobby Jett, his Iowa City home isn't farmhouse-inspired. It is farmhouse. His home, which was originally constructed using locally made red brick (which is still intact today), was built in 1853 on a plot of land that once stretched 120 acres. It's had a long, treasured history, and when Jett turned to Neumann Monson Architects for a remodel, his big ask was simple: preserve as much of the original footprint of the home as possible.

### The Design Challenge

It started with a site visit before Jett had even purchased the property, says Neumann Monson's Tim Schroeder, AIA, project principal and design architect. "If you've seen the photo of the exterior, you can imagine what it looked like inside," he says. "As we wrapped up the visit, Bobby asked if we could do something with the property. I mustered up some confidence and said, 'Sure!'" Jett saw potential, and for the Neumann Monson team – which included interior designer Amy Guhl and project manager Brodie Campbell – and contractor Smith and Wood Construction, his vision was infectious.

"The competing challenge was to make the tiny old house livable and tailor it to our client's modern lifestyle," says Schroeder. "The home's scale offered constraints that made it necessary to deviate from a simple restoration. Deviations were edited to the simplest form possible to have contrast between what's new and what's original." The warmth and intimacy carried by the brick and wood were ultimately accentuated by white surfaces and clean lines. Minimal details let the natural materials converse with the steel and light. In Jett's home, authenticity and simplicity were the goal.

### All in the Details

The footprint of the home meant the team had to get creative when it came to maximizing the living space.

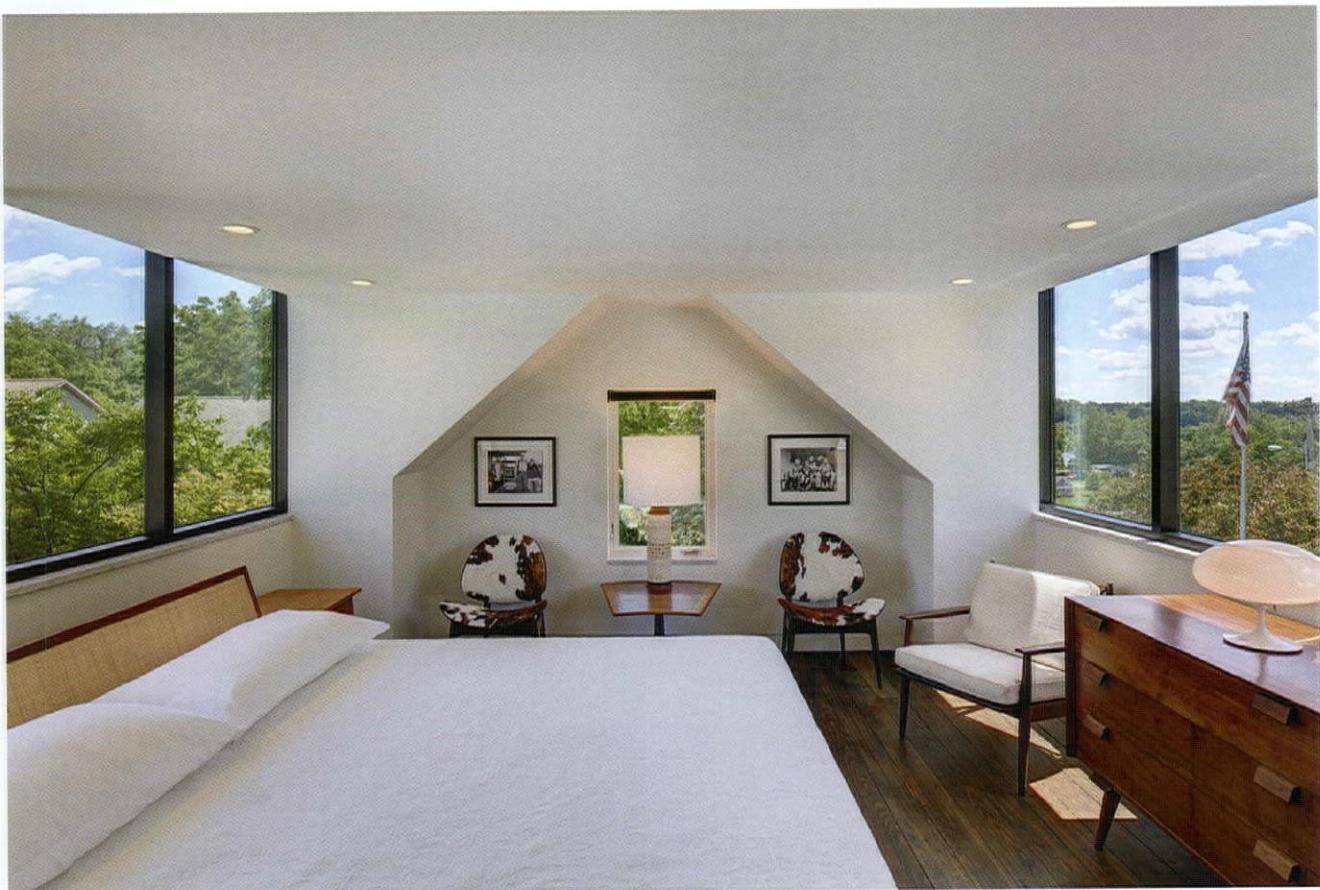
Neumann Monson integrated an unobtrusive, functional kitchen at the north end of the home. Storage was incorporated into the adjacent wall where openings existed in the original brick wall. Across the house, on the south exterior wall, they employed a similar approach by building in the study's shelving and storage.

Between the two walls is the staircase, which Schroeder refers to as "the centerpiece." Partly because of its striking contrast, and partly because of its complexities. "It was the most challenging exercise," he says. "We struggled for quite some time to find a place where it would fit and meet code requirements." They scrutinized their options in the limited space endlessly, and ultimately landed on a pared-down stair that maintains headroom and clearances both above and below, and keeps the space from feeling heavy and weighed down visually.

The bedroom presented its own set of challenges: the sloped ceiling made the space even tighter. For the space to be usable, dormers on the west, east, and south portions of the pitched roof were a requirement. "I had initially thought they would look too modern, but Tim explained to me that they would actually detract



**Above (Before Images):** The farmhouse on Foster Road was neglected for years and overtaken by overgrowth, but owner Bobby Jett saw the potential. Images courtesy of Neumann Monson Architects.



much less from the original look of the house than I thought, and he was spot on,” says Jett. It was something the Neumann Monson team had contemplated seriously. “We certainly considered their impact on the house’s appearance, but their exterior expression is basically a by-product of the necessary headroom with as little elaboration as possible,” says Schroeder. By maximizing the dormers’ glazing, they cashed in on potential for light and views. The rest of the nooks and crannies underneath the old roof “fit the rituals of domestic life – dressing, bathing, laundry – at a scale appropriate to a quaint retreat,” says Schroeder.

### Beyond the Walls

Today’s property no longer sits on 120 sprawling acres. By the time Jett purchased the home, the original property had been subdivided, and condominiums were built nearby. The land had been

unmaintained. To give the home the setting it deserved, the first step was to clear out the overgrowth and salvage the healthy trees. Once that was finished, the stone from a crumbling retaining wall at the edge of the property was harvested and reconstructed into a new dry-stack wall. To finish the lot, a weathering steel fence was raised around the property, and all-new landscaping was installed, including arborvitae, rose bushes, and daylilies. The completed look suits the home, and sets the historical property apart from its surroundings.

To link the garage to the home, a covered walkway was built. It echoes the massing, but in a minimalized and subdued style without eaves and dark, flush cedar cladding.

### The Final Product

Schroeder says Neumann Monson is thankful to have been part of the transformation of the property,

particularly with a client who exudes excitement. The project took a year-and-a-half to complete – Jett was there every day, snapping photos of the progress.

“I still have the original pencil sketch Tim did for me, and the house looks exactly like the first drawing he showed me,” says Jett.

The most rewarding part of the 1,538-square-foot-project for Schroeder? Seeing it all come together just as Jett envisioned. “It was certainly the fulfillment of the client’s vision,” he says of the project, which completed in 2017, “and hopefully exceeding it.”

Jett says it best: “Working with Neumann Monson exceeded my expectations. Tim understood my vision immediately. I knew in my mind what I wanted to accomplish, and that was to preserve the history of the house as well as the grounds for years to come. I was able to update the house and maintain the integrity of the original structure as it was built, and to me, this was extremely rewarding.”



**Top left:** A spiral staircase connects the main living space to the bedroom. The design team opted for a pared-down look that maintains headroom and clearances both above and below while keeping the space visually open and airy. **Bottom left:** The original home was the square structure to the west of the existing house; the east section was added a few years later. The garage was designed to mimic the house in design and matches up with the roofline of the existing home. **Top right:** When Jett purchased the land, it was overgrown. Once it was cleared and the healthy trees were salvaged, a weathering steel fence was raised around the property, and all-new landscaping was installed. **Middle right:** One of the most notable features in the home is the fireplace mantle, which is original to the structure. **Bottom right:** A covered walkway made from dark cedar cladding echoes the home's massing and connects the garage to the home.



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# COLLABORATION AT THE CORE OF CONTEMPORARY

A renovated Iowa City home uses modern design to reinforce a sense of family

**WORDS:** JULIA DELLITT **IMAGES:** PAUL CROSBY **ARCHITECT:** SUBSTANCE

When a young family in Iowa City approached substance about building a new home, it seemed like a straightforward residential project – until the team saw the client's property. The site backed up to federally controlled land, which meant it could never be built upon, and so the concept of transforming their existing home amid a landscape of lush trees and a local reservoir came into play.

"What we tried to do was figure out the logic behind the original house, and how to basically clarify that logic through design,"

says Paul Mankins, FAIA, principal at substance. "It was already a contemporary home, but we wanted to amplify characteristics that worked well."

The result? A modern abode that includes three structural "slices" for eating, living, and sleeping, with plenty of open, light-filled space, as well as a limited material palette for maximum visual impact. Although the renovation only added 300 square feet to the home, it became a totally different space inside, while remaining true to the needs and

stylistic preferences of the owners. "We were able to change how the house felt without really changing the shape of it on the outside," notes architect Kevin Wagner, AIA, architect with substance.

But the project took about three years to complete, due to a series of unexpected challenges, including a contractor change-up. Once the team identified a new builder, the construction team faced more unknowns – like rotting walls and a need to redo the entire mechanical system of the house – and encountered additional design hurdles.



"The design created situations where the kids could be reading in the upper loft, someone could be in the kitchen or playing the piano, and another person could be in the living room reading the paper — and while they were in separate spaces, they were all 'together.'"

— PAUL MANKINS, FAIA

"We couldn't get around the fact that the street view of the house was dominated by a 2.5-car garage. Instead of a grim entrance with very few windows facing the street, we tried to establish an entry sequence off to the side that grabbed your attention, and ended up vastly improving the curb appeal of the house," explains Mankins.

However, the project only succeeded due to the collaborative relationship between invested parties: architect, contractor, and client. "The owners were fairly hands-off during construction, but they trusted us, which was exciting," says Mindy Aust, AIA, principal at substance. In turn, adds Mankins, his team enjoyed watching their clients begin to understand the logic used to

make and deploy design decisions, such as interconnecting interior spaces that promote a sense of family.

"As a result, they lived very differently," says Mankins. "There were fewer separate private spaces and more open continuous volumes. The slices were a formal device, but the separation between the kitchen/dining slice and the living slice was minimal, allowing both to function as one large loft space. The design created situations where the kids could be reading in the upper loft, someone could be in the kitchen or playing the piano, and another person could be in the living room reading the paper — and while they were in separate spaces, they were all 'together.'"

**Opposite:** Using an intentionally minimal design palette, the architects worked to balance and amplify the spacious, light-filled kitchen.

**Above Left:** The living area furthers a sense of openness throughout the main floor, and serves as the next "slice" of an attention-grabbing entry sequence. **Center:** The individual "slices" step back to create more intimate spaces. Soaring ceilings and skylights allow ample sunlight and views.

**Right:** A second-story loft offers an upstairs oasis of picturesque backyard views, a wide expanse of windows, and bookshelf-lined walls.

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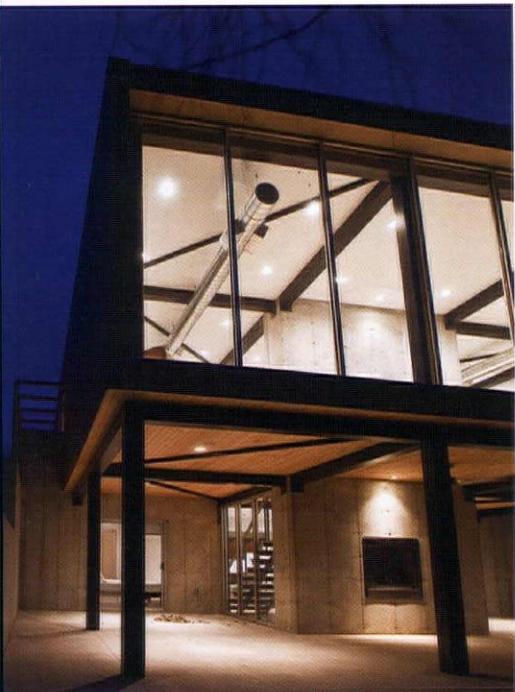
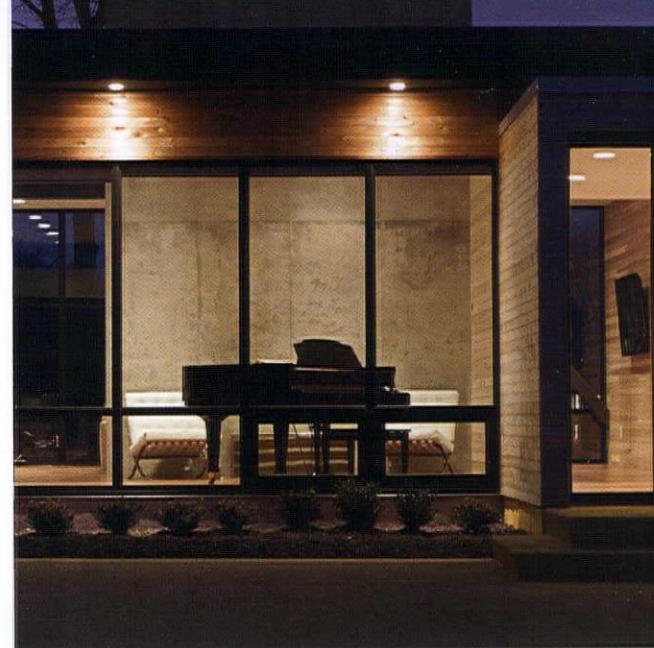
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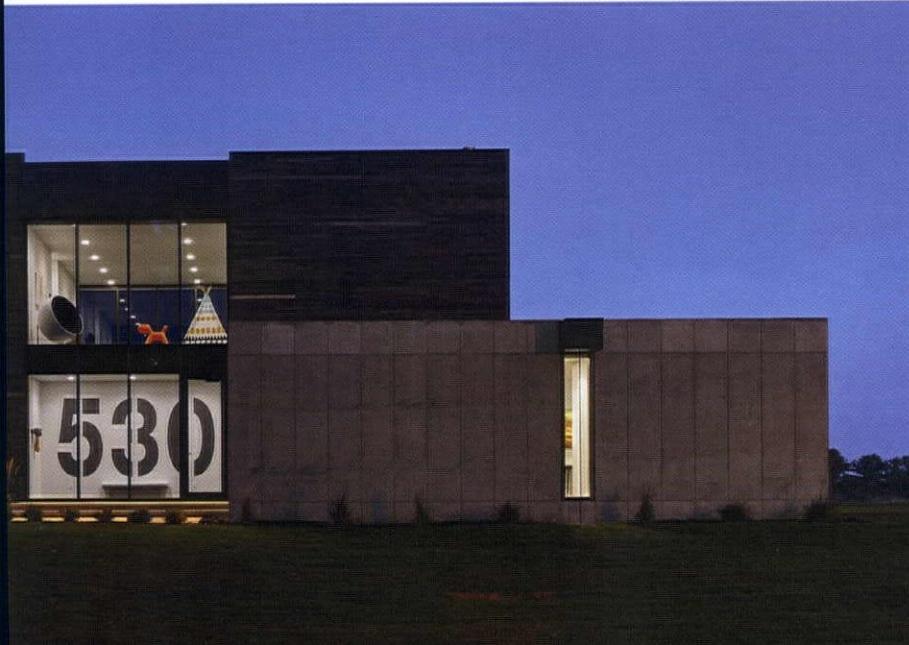
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# OPPOSITION RESEARCH

The 530 House finds privacy and exposure through space and material

WORDS: COLE NORUM IMAGES: CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO ARCHITECT: PLAN ARCHITECTURE



A big house sits on a prairie. Some 4,000 square feet in Dakota Dunes, South Dakota, the 530 House is nestled between swaths of natural grass and the Missouri River. Family, guest, and shared spaces are carefully delineated within its wood and concrete exterior. It is a striking piece of modern architecture, born of extensive collaboration between occupants and designers. And they happen to be the same people.

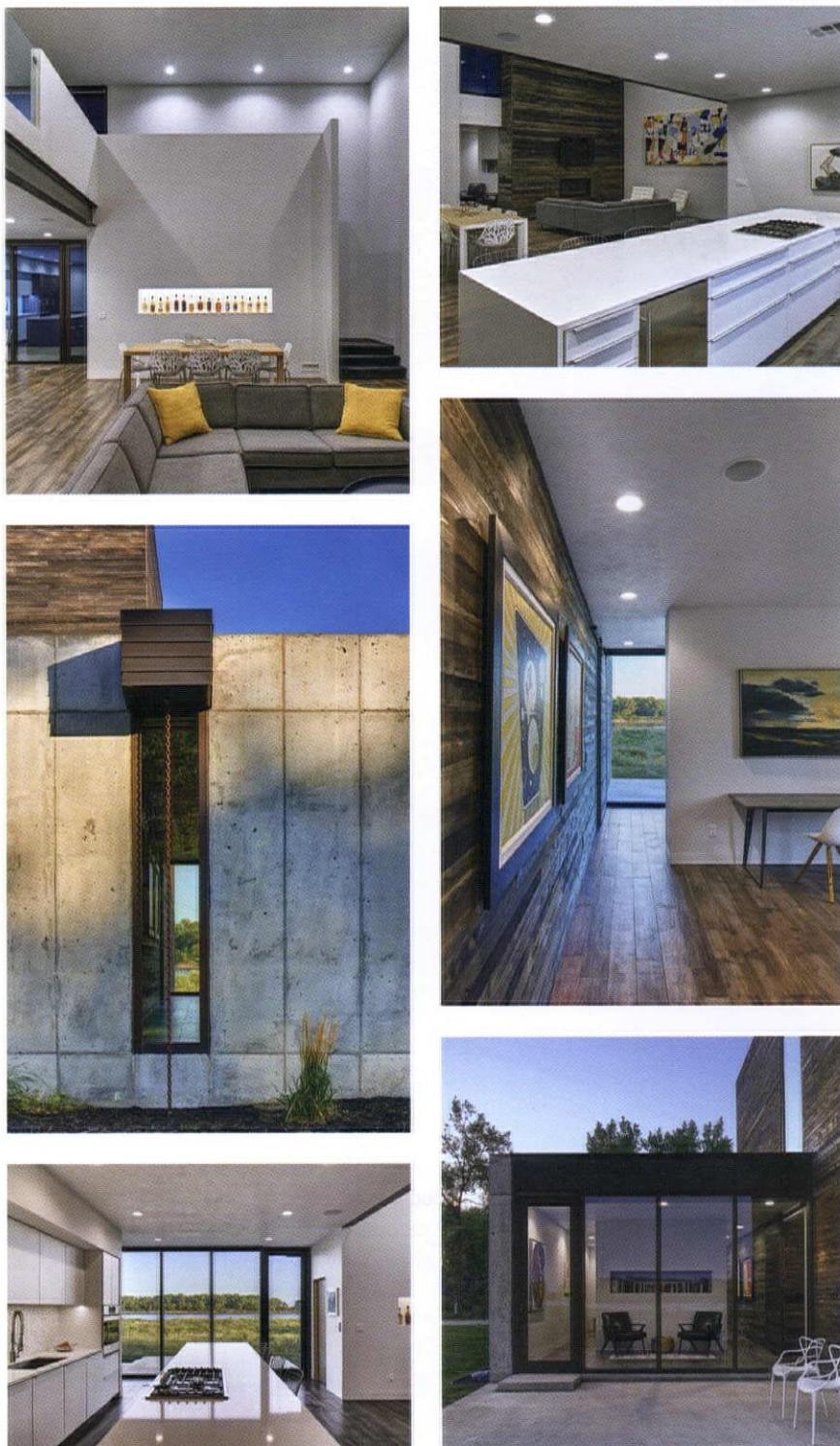
The 530 House is the culmination of years of planning by partners and co-founders Lisa Kalaher, AIA, and Nathan Kalaher, AIA. In designing the home for their own young family of four, the two first considered the site itself. The land was entirely prairie when purchased in 2007, but extensive flooding in 2011 profoundly altered the landscape and re-situated it as part of a levee system. "The site plays a significant role in the home's design," Lisa says. "One way or the other, you're going to respond to a big river," Nathan says. The response was to build above the site without engaging the levee system. A home that both seeks out surroundings and turns its back on them. Ambivalence. "You want



to be a part of the site, and at the same time you need to protect yourself from the site,” Nathan continues.

The Kalahers followed a diagrammatic approach to their design from its inception. “That’s one of the fun things about being your own client,” says Nathan. “You can be a little more purist on your own project just for the sake of experiment.” This manifested in three spaces defined by purpose and materiality. Guest and family spaces are located on separate levels and ends of the house, with the family occupying the east section of the second level. Wood is used throughout the family space with concrete present in the first-level guest areas. “It’s a series of oppositions. There aren’t a lot of spaces bleeding into each other.” In the middle of it all, on both levels, is the shared space: the great room, the kitchen. The defining material is glass. The windows are tall; they offer views of the waterfront and prairie, then present those rooms as viewable from the exterior. “There is always a sense in the home that you are connected to the surrounding site,” Lisa says.

The Kalahers are a social family who desired elements of privacy on an exposed site. Their home is an exercise in contrast. Nathan calls it a “moment on the river.” It plays out in a complex but succinct manner. A manicured lawn meets the natural prairie in sharp lines. Wood, a warm knotty-cedar, traces the exterior in measured tandem with concrete, machined and cool. From the river or the grass, you can see the center, two stories; one of three spaces. Lisa says it will never be quite finished. “There’s always more work to be done,” she says. “It sits on a site that isn’t natural, but to some degree wants to be,” says Nathan. “It’s no surprise the result is a bit of two minds, and that’s just fine.”



**Opposite:** Tall windows provide views out of and into the 530 House. **Left (top to bottom):** The shared space sits at the home’s center and occupies its two levels. Concrete is prevalent in the guest area; family and shared spaces feature wood floors throughout. **Right (top to bottom):** The 530 House both engages its surroundings and seeks privacy from them. Materiality and purpose define the 530 House’s three spaces.

# Imagine the Potential



How one family transformed  
a forgotten shack into a  
sustainable dream home

WORDS: MEGAN BANNISTER

IMAGES: CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA, INTEGRATED STUDIO

ARCHITECT: NEUMANN MONSON ARCHITECTS

Designing dream homes may seem like average, day-to-day work for many architects. But for Neumann Monson Architects President Tim Schroeder, AIA, this project was a much more personal one.

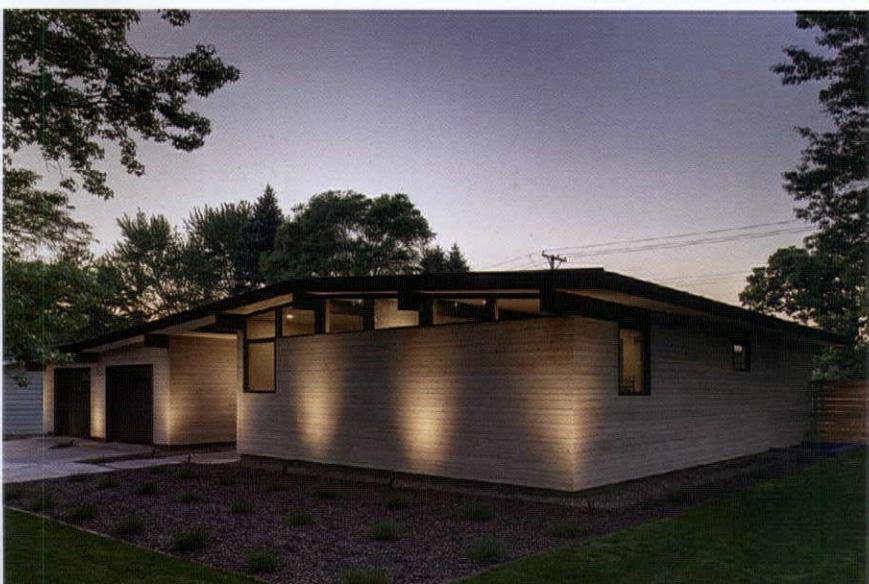
"Before kids, my wife and I had restored a few homes on shoestring budgets," Schroeder says. "As the kids became mobile, we opted for a new home and minimal maintenance in the suburbs. With the kids both in high school, we were ready for another renovation challenge, and this time we had saved enough to do it right."

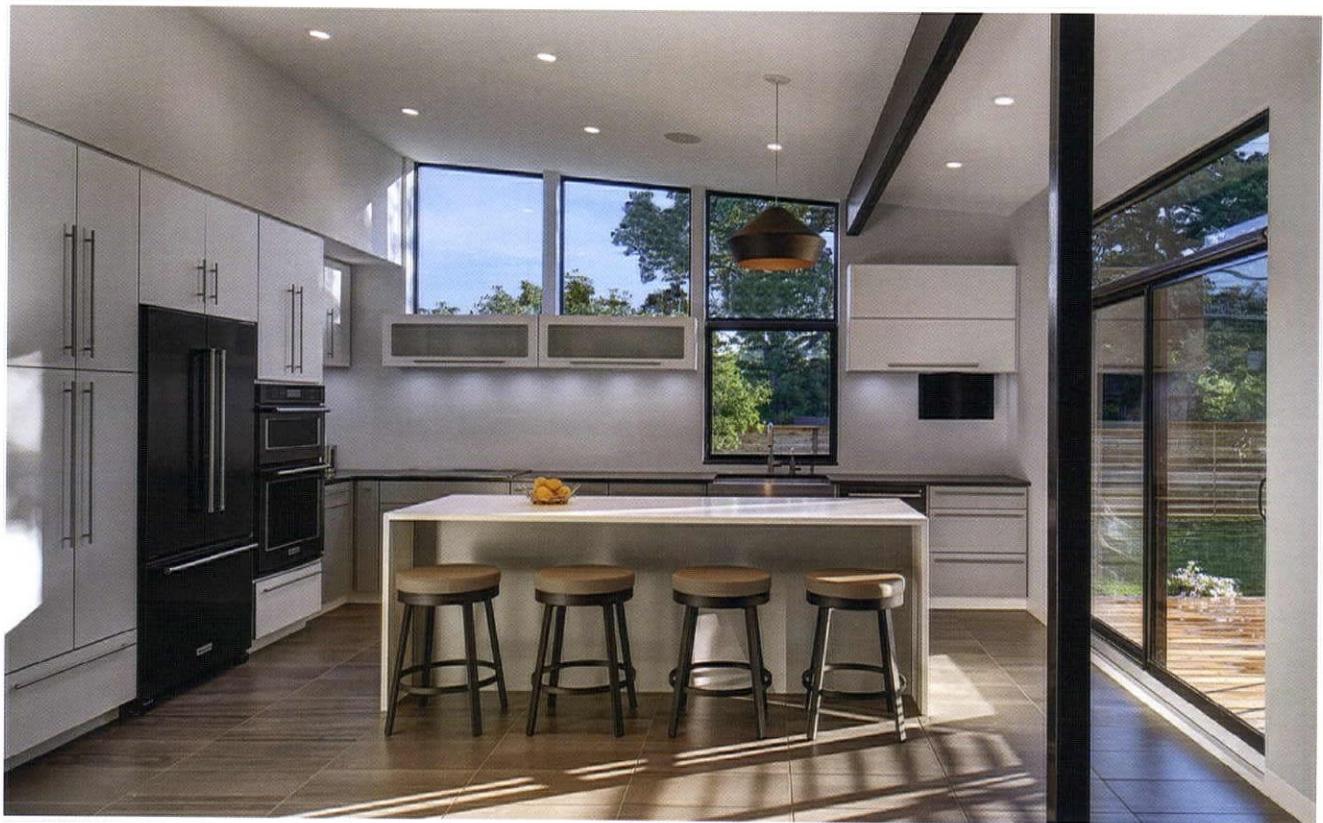
Instead of staying in the suburbs, the family of four found a house in the Iowa City neighborhood of University Heights. The 1960s home, which was known by neighbors as "the shack," had long been under-maintained and was in need of owners who wouldn't shy away from the serious renovation required.

The Schroders were looking for an existing space with character, in need of rescue, and in a walkable neighborhood to restore to a clean, crisp design using simple, authentic materials. The forgotten shack was everything they were looking for in a new home.

Schroeder, along with a design team from Neumann Monson, transformed the small home into a space that was not only functional for the family, but one that is also conscious of the strains humans put on the environment. The remodeled residence is a net-zero energy home, meaning every aspect is carbon neutral.

While Schroeder says he and a number of Neumann Monson's other principals have retrofitted their homes to be as close to net-zero energy as possible, this home's entire renovation was executed





with energy efficiency in mind. The home includes a well-insulated envelope, a horizontally bored geothermal HVAC system, all LED lighting, and a photovoltaic array on the low-slope roof that powers the home's mechanical system as well as its lighting and EnergyStar appliances.

The renovation almost doubled the family's usable living space. The home's minimalist design centers on bold, sleek lines, and maximizes natural light through oversized windows while maintaining privacy. The remodeled space features an exterior tongue-and-groove cedar ventilated rainscreen, low-slope roof, and an interior with minimalist mid-century detailing.

"As the renovation took shape [our neighbors] became big cheerleaders for what we were doing and actually talked us into another renovation on the street," Schroeder says.

While their new neighbors were initially dubious of the project, Schroeder says that the home's transformation has been a rallying point for the community.

"It has been rewarding to see the positive impact the two renovations have made on the neighborhood as well as property values," he says. "The renovations have been a catalyst for a lot of transition within the greater neighborhood as older residents take advantage of the improved values and additional homes are undergoing aggressive improvements."

**Opposite: Top:** Before the Schroeders chose to take on a 1960s home in Iowa City's University Heights neighborhood, the under-maintained building was known by neighbors as "the shack." **Bottom:** The new exterior of the home features tongue-and-groove ventilated rainscreen, low-slope roof, and oversized windows. **Above:** The Schroeders' renovated home features minimalist mid-century detailing and ample sources of natural light. The home's interior and exterior style blend together using clean, crisp design with simple, authentic materials.

# project credits

## Collected

### Forces of Nature | 08

**Location:** Ames, IA  
**Architect:** Iowa State University – Architecture 202  
**Photographers:** Heather Schulte, Joe Kastner & Christopher Gannon

### A Monumental Journey | 11

**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Concept Art:** Kerry James Marshall  
**Architect of Record:** substance  
**Engineer:** Saul Engineering  
**Landscape Architect:** Genus Landscape Architects  
**Masonry:** Seedorff Masonry  
**General Contractor:** Neumann Brothers  
**Fabrication:** Johnson Machine Works  
**Project Owner:** Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation  
**Photographer:** Hannah Johnson, Assoc. AIA

## Profile

### A Look and a Lifestyle | 20

**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Neumann Monson Architects  
**Photographer:** Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio  
**Contractor:** Hildreth Construction  
**Furniture Consultant:** Projects Contemporary Furniture

## Features

### A House in the Woods | 24

**Location:** Clive, IA  
**Architect:** BNIM  
**Photographer:** Kelly Callewaert  
**Contractor:** Mainbuilt / Mark Main  
**Structural Engineer:** Saul Engineering / Brad Stork, PE

### The Farmhouse on Foster Road | 28

**Location:** Iowa City, IA  
**Architect:** Neumann Monson Architects  
**Photographer:** Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio  
**Contractor:** Smith & Wood Construction  
**Structural Engineer:** M2B  
**HVAC:** E&J Geothermal  
**Electric:** Advance Electric

## Collaboration at the

### Core of Contemporary | 34

**Location:** Iowa City, IA  
**Architect:** substance  
**Photographer:** Paul Crosby  
**Contractor:** McDonough Structures  
**Engineer:** Saul Engineering

### Opposition Research | 38

**Location:** Dakota Dunes, SD  
**Architect:** PLaN Architecture  
**Photographer:** Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio  
**Contractor:** Nelson Construction and Development  
**Civil Engineer:** Olsson Associates

### Imagine the Potential | 40

**Location:** Iowa City, IA  
**Architect:** Neumann Monson Architects  
**Photographer:** Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio  
**Contractor:** McComas Lacina Construction, Smith & Wood Construction  
**Plumbing:** Muller Plumbing  
**Electric:** Hellwig Electric, LLC



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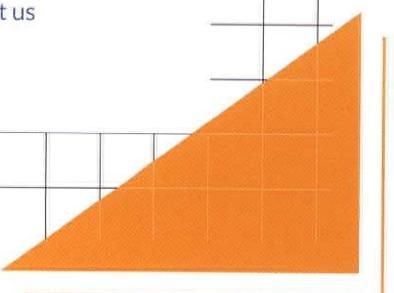
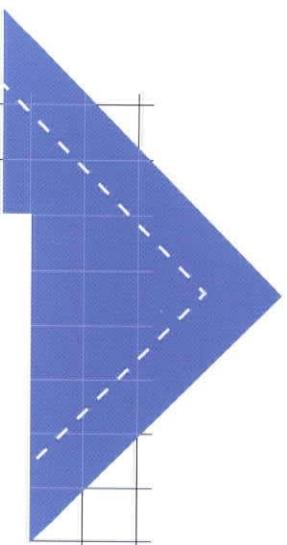
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Philippe Bégin, *Le Québec et l'Amérique du Nord à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Montréal, 1973.

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